

Power to the people – next steps

Thursday, July 30, Queenstown Memorial Centre, 7 to 9 PM

How can we directly shape policy at the local level and use this Covid crisis as an opportunity for our Queenstown Lakes community to reset for the better?

This is the question democracy advocate, academic and author Max Rashbrooke will be discussing at the first RESET conversation being held by One New Zealand, partnered by Catalyst Trust, Shaping Our Future and Sustainable Queenstown, on Thursday, July 30.

Research shows that diverse teams make better decisions than individuals 87% of the time, says One New Zealand chair Monique Kelly. “The principle is that good decisions are made by many brains – not big brains.”

But the current democratic system fails to follow this logic, with decision-making left to a few, with scant diversity and community consultation usually too little and too late.

Max was in Queenstown to speak about participatory democracy, and the need for more and more diverse voices around the decision-making table, at a Catalyst Trust talk last July.

Ms Kelly said this first RESET discussion would help identify the preferred process for community input, the timeline and first subject to tackle. The same discussion will be held in Wanaka.

Catalyst Trust co-chair Cath Gilmour said the aim was to ensure Queenstown Lakes District Councillors could use this invaluable community input to help shape their Long Term Plan.

The LTP will set the programme for the next three years’ Council capital expenditure and a broad outline of projects through to 2031. “So it is vital our community helps set the parameters and objectives that will shape our infrastructure as we rebuild and recover, both our community and our economy.”

Ms Kelly, who is also a member of council’s Regenerative Action Group that is looking at medium to long-term post-Covid recovery, said the systemic change the RESET conversation needed to kickstart would not be quick.

“But we need to start, because if we aren’t at the decision-making table, we can’t influence the decisions. And these decisions will affect everyone in our community, not only the powerful and wealthy.”

Tickets available at [Eventbrite](#) Please bring your ticket. If cost would be a barrier, please contact Catalyst at connect@catalystnz.org and we will ensure you a seat. Tea and coffee and the chance for input and further discussion from 8.30 PM.

For further information: [One New Zealand Foundation](#), [Max Rashbrooke](#), [Catalyst Trust](#) and [Shaping Our Future](#)